depends upon duration of its validity. Reasons for increase in visa fee are:

(i) In 1990 the visa regime was liberalised and the duration of visa was extended upto 5 years but the visa fee was not appropriately increased.

(ii) The recent devaluation of Indian rupee made it imperative to revise the visa fee upwards.

(iii) Indian visa fee was reduced unnaturally in favour of nationals of UK, USA, FRG, France, Spain, Italy and Netherlands. But these countries did not reciprocate to our action.

(iv) Increasing local cost of running consular and visa services at Mission Post abroad.

(v) Mobilising funds for proper staffing and modernisation of Consular Section in our Mission abroad, for further improving the quality of services.

(c) Visa fee is a very small fraction of total expenses incurred by a tourist. The upward revision of visa fee therefore, may not materially affect the tourism industry adversely. Tourists are not attracted so much by low visa fee as by internal peace and tranquillity, tourist value of a country, tourist infrastructure, expeditious special services to tourists etc.

(d) Government policies are reviewed from time to time.

(e) and (f) Yes, Sir. A few representations have been received by Indian Embassies in Singapore and Malaysia. Details are awaited.

Funds for Command area development Programme in Maharashtra

*113. SHRI SUDHIR SAWANT: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether funds have been obtained from the European Economic Community or other international institutions for the implementation of the Command Area Development Programme in the Konkon region of Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to ensure proper utilisation of such funds?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) An Agreement was signed in October 1988 with European Economic Community for assistance of 15 million ECU (Rupees Twenty two crores) for development of water control system for diversification of crops in Konkan region of Maharashtra.

(c) Government of Maharashtra has been advised to provide additional staff and additional funds, and to prepare additional new schemes according to a specified time schedule.

Foreign Collaboration for Exploitation of Natural Gas

*114. SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA:
DR. A.K. PATEL:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for collaboration of Oil and Natural Gas Commission/Gas Authority of India with France for providing technology for exploitation of natural gas available in South India;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the proposal is